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The
Command  **Run**

Inaugural Issue ■ Miami ■ Dec. 17, 1999

New millennium a time to pause, rejoice

By Gen. Charles E. Wilhelm
Commander in Chief,
U.S. Southern Command

As we approach this holiday season and prepare to begin a new millennium, it is fitting that we pause and rejoice in the freedom that your hard work and dedication makes possible for millions of Americans. During 1999, U.S. Southern Command soldiers, sailors, airmen, Marines, Coast Guardsmen and civilians served with distinction. Regrettably, some made the ultimate sacrifice while fulfilling America's commitments in Latin America and the Caribbean.

During the holidays, my thoughts and prayers go out to all of you -- especially to those

serving far from home. I know you are performing difficult and sometimes dangerous missions away from family and loved ones. I am proud of the difference you make by saving lives and improving the quality of life for tens of thousands of people in our AOR. Wherever you are during this festive season, know that your service and sacrifices are appreciated by a grateful nation.

Valerie joins me in sending warmest and best wishes to you and your families for a safe and joyous holiday season and a happy and prosperous New Year. God bless you all.

Sincerely,

Charles E. Wilhelm



Photo by Air Force Tech. Sgt. Lee Roberts

Gen. Charles E. Wilhelm and wife, Valerie, pose with Tamera Harrington, 3, at the 1999 Holiday Family Party Dec. 2 at the Headquarters in Miami. Tamera's parents are Air Force Capt. Mark Harrington and wife, Jennifer.

Reflect on meaning of season, service

By William S. Cohen
Secretary of Defense

Greetings. Every year, it is my pleasure to take a moment during the holiday season to review the events of the past year and to reflect on the meaning of the season as well as on the meaning of your service.

At this time last year, many of you were engaged in two great missions: providing relief and rescue to the people of Central

America in the wake of Hurricane Mitch; and standing up to Saddam Hussein and his weapons program in Operation Desert Fox. Since then, many of you have taken part in or supported the largest military operation in Europe since the Second World War. You turned back aggression in Kosovo. You offered a hand of help and hope to refugees across that region. Now you are keeping the peace across Kosovo.

Indeed, whether



patrolling the dangerous no-fly zones over Iraq, standing vigilant on the Korean Peninsula or serving at bases here at home, all of you have been working without pause to give the greatest gift of all, the gift of peace. Last year, I wrote that because you are always there for America, America is

Secretary of Defense William S. Cohen and wife Janet Langhart Cohen wish every service member and their families a wonderful holiday season. (Photo by R. D. Ward)

determined to always be there for you.

This year, I can point to a recognition for you and your families that takes note of your remarkable service: the largest increase in military pay and benefits in a generation. This includes increased rewards for performance, targeted

pay raises and bonuses, and the restoration of retirement benefits by returning you to 50 percent at 20 years of service. We can never pay you enough for what you do. But we can, and we will, pay you more. So wherever you are serving today, know that all Americans are eternally indebted to each of you for your service.

Wherever you serve in the coming year, know that you are in our prayers. On behalf of a grateful nation, have a wonderful holiday season. God bless you and your families, and God bless the United States of America.

Former President Carter leads U.S. delegation to historical Panama Canal turnover ceremony



Photos by Army Col. Chuck Jacoby

Former President Jimmy Carter formally turns over control of the Panama Canal Dec. 14 to Panamanian President Mireya Moscoso during a ceremony at Miraflores Locks at the canal's Pacific entrance.

1903 - Panama declares independence. U.S. signs treaty to build the canal.

1904 - Construction began May 4.

1914 - Official opening day is Aug. 15.

1977 - President Carter and Gen. Torrijos sign treaties, which state U.S. will handoff control of canal in 1999.

1999 - U.S. formally turns over control of Panama Canal.



Former President Jimmy Carter poses with Gen. Charles E. Wilhelm, U.S. Southern Command commander in chief, and the general's wife, Valerie, at the ceremonial turnover of the Panama Canal Dec. 14. President Carter signed the treaty to turn over the canal in 1977.



A rising star

Gen. Charles E. Wilhelm (Right), U.S. Southern Command commander in chief, promotes Army Reserve Brig. Gen. Paul E. Lima, deputy commander in chief for Mobilization and Reserve Affairs, to the rank of major general during a ceremony at the Main Conference Room Saturday. Lima's wife, Maria Elena, assists Wilhelm with the promotion.

Photo by Tom Pattison

Disaster relief experts coordinate regional response

By Lt. Col. John B. Snyder
SOUTHCOM Public Affairs

SAN PEDRO SULA, Honduras - Rallying to the slogan of “One Team, One Region,” disaster relief experts from Central America, Caribbean, Europe and the United States met here Dec. 6-10 to generate thought on how to develop a regional response to future disasters, said Col. Allen Coulter, U.S. Southern Command director of logistics.

Although Central America received tremendous world support and aid, there was no mechanism to bring about a coordinated Hurricane Mitch disaster relief response, Coulter said.

Coulter’s comments came at the beginning of a SOUTHCOM-sponsored Disaster Relief Conference conducted to provide a



Photos by Army Lt. Col. John B. Snyder

Juan Bendeck (Second from right), president of Honduran relief agency COPECO, discusses with the media the importance of the U.S. Southern Command conference to Central America.

forum to discuss how the region can best organize, prepare, and respond to natural disasters in Central America.

Juan Bendeck, president of the Honduran disaster relief organization called COPECO, said that for the first time in Cen-

tral America the nations of this region are coming together to unify disaster relief efforts. His goal for his country is to be self-

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sufficient during an emergency, but Bendeck added that most disasters require outside support.

Most of the discussions centered on how to coordinate the relief aid to a disaster-stricken country. According to many at the conference, what occurred during Hurricane Mitch was that millions of pounds of relief aid from foreign governments and non-governmental organizations, such as the International Red Cross, hit Central America without a mechanism to adequately process and distribute the aid.

Michael Elmquist, from the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, said that the UN never had control of the relief aid flowing into



Army Lt. Col. Mike Morales, U.S. Military Group in Honduras, provides great insight for the Honduran press to the benefits of developing a regional disaster relief response.

Central America because of three main problems providing disaster relief support.

The first dealt with the UN losing visibility of the tremendous influx of relief aid into a disaster-stricken area. The second problem was that once the

aid arrived, there was usually a long delay in getting that support to those who needed it most. The third problem was the UN simply did not have adequate presence in the field to manage or oversee disaster-relief aid. Therefore, it is important that

regions develop a unified response, Elmquist said.

For most Americans, the devastation caused by Hurricane Mitch has faded from their memories just as the rain washed away much of the Honduran and Nicaraguan countryside. More than 9,000 people perished, most of whom were from Honduras.

Nevertheless, Central Americans still speak of Hurricane Mitch as if it happened yesterday, said Dr. Rocio Saenz, director of the Pan-American Health Organization. She added that as bad as Hurricane Mitch was it did have a good point in that it revitalized all the disaster relief programs in the region.

Saenz' comments truly set the tone for the four-day conference.

Army holds Hispanic conference in Miami



Photos by Raul Duany

(Left to right) Secretary of the Army Louis Caldera; Diaz Guarione, president of the Cuban-American National Council; Army Maj. Gen. Alfred Valenzuela, U.S. Southern Command deputy commander; and Henry Cisneros, president of Univision, join together at the U.S. Army's Third Hispanic Leadership Conference Dec. 10. The conference sought to increase awareness of educational and career opportunities for Hispanic youth in the Army.



Henry Cisneros (Right) greets Florida Senator Bob Graham as Gen. Charles E. Wilhelm looks on.

(Above) Secretary of the Army Louis Caldera speaks at a press conference Dec. 10 at the Army's Third Hispanic Leadership Conference held in Miami. Previous conferences were held in San Antonio and Los Angeles.

New DFAS system should simplify, speed pay changes

By Staff Sgt. Kathleen T. Rhem, USA
American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON — Military and DoD civilian employees and retirees will soon be able to make many routine changes to their official pay accounts whenever they want by phone or via the World Wide Web.

The Defense Finance and Accounting Service is in the process of implementing the Employee/Member Self-Service Advisories program. DFAS officials project the program will be available for some customers in February 2000.

The officials said defense payroll customers using the round-the-clock Web and phone systems will be able to change

their federal income tax withholding; start, stop or change allotments; change their correspondence address; and update information for their financial institution electronic fund transfers.

DFAS officials said the self-service program should improve the processing of pay changes by saving time and reducing the current paper trail. Now, customers may have to wait weeks for action because they must visit a finance

customer service representative and submit written forms that have to be processed by a string of clerks, they ex-

plained.

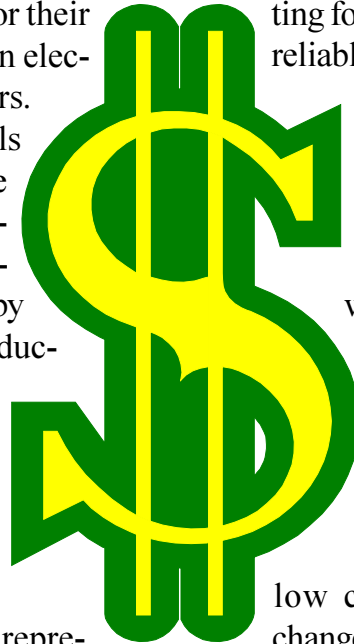
“Employee/Member Self-Service provides an alternative to completing and submitting forms and will provide reliable and accurate information,” DFAS project officer Gloria Cranford-Bates said. “Most importantly, E/MSS will be a fast, easy and secure way for customers to update payroll-related transactions at their convenience.”

The system will allow customers to make changes nearly instantly on their own. Officials explained that no written confirmation will be received, but members can

check these changes by re-accessing the system in a week. Changes will also be annotated on the customer’s next Leave and Earning Statement.

A personal identification number will control customer access. DFAS plans to mail letters to eligible customers with a temporary PIN they can customize the first time they use the system, officials said. The letter will also give customers the Web site address and the toll-free number to access the system.

The DFAS plan calls for E/MSS to become available in two phases. DFAS representative Cathy Ferguson said letters are



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being mailed to DoD retirees and surviving annuitants, Marines and civilian employees, the first

group of people who will have system access. Soldiers, sailors and airmen will gain access a few months later.

The military services' current telephone systems for their mem-

bers will eventually be rolled into the DFAS self-service system.

E/MSS Internet transactions will be encrypted using 128-bit encryption and Secure Socket Layer technology,

DFAS officials said. This will prevent information from being read by others while being transmitted from the customer's personal computer to the E/MSS Web site. Also for security reasons, of-

officials recommend against using cellular phones to access the IVRS system.

Additional information can be obtained on the DFAS Website, www.dfas.mil.

Big changes set for employee thrift plan

By Douglas J. Gillert
American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON — More investment funds to choose from and daily transaction processing are among the major changes coming May 1, 2000, to the federal employees' Thrift Savings Plan.

The Federal Retirement Thrift Investment Board that manages the government's 401(k) for civilian employees will transfer all existing accounts to a new system in

April. The system will convert dollar amounts to shares and offer investors two new investment options in addition to the three existing funds.

The new International Stock Index Investment I Fund will be invested in the Barclays Europe, Australasia and Far East stock index. The index consists of stocks of companies in 20 countries representing 45 percent of the value of the world stock markets.

The Small Capitalization Stock Index International S Fund will be invested in a Wilshire 4500 index fund. The index represents approximately 23 percent of the market value of the U.S. stock market. It con-

sists of stock actively traded in American stock markets except those in the Standard and Poor's 500 index.

The I Fund is expected to be the most volatile of TSP's five in the short run, followed by the S Fund. Third is the current C Fund, a Barclays Equity Index Fund that tracks the S&P 500. The C, I and S funds potentially can yield higher returns than the safer but generally lower yielding F bond fund and G government securities fund.

Currently, changes investors make to their accounts take effect the following

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month. Under the new system, transactions will be processed each business day, giving investors more flexibility in managing their accounts. They also won't have to wait for a semiannual open season to change the amount deducted from their pay for Thrift Savings Plan investment. Instead, they will be able to allocate future contributions at any time using the **ThriftLine [(504) 255-8777]** or the internet /World Wide Web (**www.tsp.gov**) or by submitting a **Form TSP-50** directly to their



Thrift Savings Plan Dec. 31. Currently they record keeper. are May 15-July 31 and

Open seasons will still occur for new enrollments, but the dates will change. The new periods will be April 15-June 30 and Sept. 30-

Nov. 15-Jan. 31. Enrollees will receive quarterly rather than biannual statements for the periods ending March 31, June 30, Sept. 30 and Dec. 31.

Loan and withdrawal transactions also will change. Quarterly statements will include loan balance information. Employees with unpaid loans will be able to amortize them more than once and repay part of the loan ahead of schedule at any time, rather than just once and for the full amount.

Included among new withdrawal options: Employees can make a one-time partial withdrawal if they haven't taken an age-based, in-service withdrawal. They can use any combination of single payments, monthly payments or a life annuity to withdraw the total account balance.

All key transactions will be available on the Thrift Savings Plan Web site. There, employees will be able to allocate future contributions, check a loan status, obtain a loan prepayment amount and begin or, where spousal approval isn't required, complete loan and withdrawal requests and reamortize loans.

More information about the changes was published in the November 1999 issues of Highlights, mailed to current Thrift Savings Plan account holders and also is available on the Thrift Savings Plan home page **www.tsp.gov/**.

News briefs

Toys for Tots

There is a Toys for Tots Program from 1 to 5 p.m. Saturday at Homestead Air Force Reserve Station. Santa will be distributing gifts to all military dependent children.

For more information or to volunteer with gift wrapping, call Guy Drab at **(305) 437-2645**.

Operation Mailbag

EILSON AIR FORCE BASE, Alaska -- Getting a letter from Santa for your child or loved one is as easy as sending a self-addressed, stamped envelope to the 354th Operations Support Squadron's Combat Weather Flight.

Members of the weather

flight here stamp envelopes with the official "North Pole, Alaska," postage cancellation stamp. It's all part of Operation Mailbag, a tradition dating back to 1954.

To have a letter postmarked from the "North Pole," send a self-addressed, stamped, legal-size envelope to:

Santa's Mailbag
354th OSS/OSW
1215 Flightline Ave.
Suite 100B
Eielson AFB, AK 99702-1520

The service is provided free **(Courtesy of Pacific Air Forces News Service)**.

Superbowl event

There is a Superbowl Extravaganza planned in January at

the Police Benevolence Association located at 10680 NW 25th Street. The time is yet to be determined. For more information, call Suzette Rubet, Directorate of Community Activities, at **(305) 437-2639**.

Holiday letters

Brighten the holidays of military members serving overseas by sending mail to "any service member." People can send letters to military missions still serving in the Former Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY) following Operation Allied Force.

To send a first-class letter weighing 13 ounces or less, as well as to family members in Europe, use the following addresses:

Land-based forces
Any service member
Operations in FRY
APO AE 09397-0001

Ship-based forces
Any service member
Operations in FRY
APO AE 09398-0001

Family members in Europe
Any family member
Operations in the FRY
APO AE 09399-0001

While the U.S. Post Office will only ship letters, the Defense Logistics Agency is accepting bulk donations. For more information, call **(800) 841-0937**.

Spouses, children get into holiday spirit at command's family party Dec. 2

MIAMI -- Gen. Charles E. Wilhelm and wife, Valerie, welcomed many of the command's spouses and children to the 1999 Holiday Family Party Dec. 2 at the headquarter's Main Conference Room. Approximately 200 children enjoyed participating in numerous games, face painting, and visiting and getting their picture taken with Santa Claus.

The general and his wife, the hosts of the event, wished everyone a wonderful holiday season, and thanked everyone for coming and for all they do to support the men and women of the U.S. Southern Command.



(Left) Gen. Charles E. Wilhelm, U.S. Southern Command commander in chief, welcomes spouses and children to the holiday family party Dec. 2 at the Main Conference Room.



(Left and above) The children pose with Santa Claus. (Photos by Air Force Tech. Sgt. Lee Roberts)

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Photos by Air Force Tech. Sgt. Lee Roberts

“Slinky” the Clown paints a girl’s face during the U.S. Southern Command’s 1999 Holiday Family Party at the Headquarters in Miami Dec. 2. “Slinky” also shaped balloons into animal characters for the children.



“Sabrina” performs her own tricks with the magic wands.



“Twisty” the Clown orchestrates a magic trick with kids attending the command’s holiday family party.



Santa Claus was a big hit for the children who attended the holiday family party .

Holiday formal

'Twas the 15th night before Christmas...



Weapons midair

Photo by Lt. Cmdr. Jane Campbell

Members of the Command Surgeon's Office Precision Drill Team throw their M-1 Daisy Popguns during a performance at the U.S. Southern Command Holiday Formal Dec. 10.

By Lt. Cmdr. Jane Campbell, USN
SOUTHCOM Public Affairs

'Twas 15 nights before Christmas, and all through the ballroom all sorts of creatures were stirring, and the command surgeon was carrying a sword.

More than 450 members of the Southern Command family turned out last Dec. 10 for the command's holiday formal. The Grand Ballroom of the Radisson Mart

Plaza Hotel was filled to capacity for the annual event.

The command's joint color guard posted and retired the colors at the formal, earning the praise of all those in attendance. Above and beyond the recognition normally given the team, they were described as the premier SOUTHCOM ambassadors for their participa-

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Photo/Felix Peguero-Luna
Brig. Gen. Jerry McABEE, chief of staff, and wife, Margaret, have the honor of first dance... to their favorite disco tune.

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tion in events all around Florida. The emcee for the evening, Brig. Gen. Ronald Burgess, the command's J-2, asked for all current and past members of the color guard to stand to be recognized for their significant contributions to the command.

Gen. Charles E. Wilhelm managed to steal the microphone away from the J-2 to take a few minutes to address all those in attendance. His remarks were focused on the accomplishments of the command in the past year, as well as an overview of the area of



Photo by Felix Peguero-Luna

Marine Corps Capt. Yessic Spencer, J-8 Programs and Resources Directorate, and wife, Sherolyn, BASEOPS, Joint Services Education Center, enjoy the festivities at the U.S. Southern Command Holiday Formal.

responsibility. He also took time to highlight the uniqueness of the last holiday season of the

millennium. He concluded his remarks by praising the efforts of all SOUTHCOM soldiers,

sailors, airmen, Marines, Coast Guardsmen, and civilian personnel, and wished everyone happy holidays. With that, Chaplain (Col.) Emilio Chaviano blessed the meal and the plates of London broil and breast of chicken were served.

While the food was good, the entertainment was clearly the highlight of the evening. The Command Surgeon's office once again took the lead of the entertainment portion of the evening. After receiving permission from the CINC to enter the room "armed," Col. Glenn Mitchell and five members of his staff marched in. The Surgeon's Office Preci-

sion Close-Order Drill Team has often been compared to the likes of the 3rd Infantry Division's Old Guard and even the Marine Corps Silent Drill Team. They marched in with precision facing movements, but -- unlike last year -- there was more to their program than simply marching in and out.

Carrying their spit-polished M-1 grade Daisy PopGuns, they performed the most difficult tasks with the greatest of ease. These tasks included, but were not limited to, the service weapons toss and the unified command

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Photo by Felix Peguero-Luna

(Above -- right to left)

Dr. (Maj.) Daniel Hoyumpa, USAF, U.S. Southern Command Health Clinic, and wife Colleen; enjoy the meal and the company of their table companions; Marilyn Proctor, U.S. Southern Command TRICARE representative, and her husband Dr. Richard Proctor.

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weapons toss. Each of these tasks were accomplished with style and flair. Then Mitchell warned the audience to stay clear of the dance floor as the team prepared to twirl their weapons. And twirl they did -- much to the surprise and amazement of everyone in the room. The team flawlessly twirled those M-1 popguns. The crowd cheered.

Upon the completion of the world-class close order drill demonstration, the entertainment portion of the evening concluded with the singing of a few holiday songs. The musical portion of the evening ended with the now-infamous rendition of

the 12 Days of Christmas. Each directorate or group of smaller offices was tasked with making up their own verse to the old favorite holiday song. The complete lyrics of the modified version of the song "On the Twelfth Day of Christmas the CINC Gave to Me"...

- 12 trip books printing...
- 11 legally approved press releases...
- 10 reservists praying...
- 9 parking spaces...
- 8 more FOLs...
- 7 surgeons slashing...
- 6 servers crashing...
- 5 briefing slides...
- 4 storms brewing...
- 3 (300) push ups...
- 2 briefers squirming...
- and . . .1 more person who will work real hard for free.

DoD honors last Comanche World War II 'Code Talker'



Arthur L. Money presents Charles Chibitty with a cased American flag during ceremonies in the Pentagon Hall of Heroes that was flown over the capitol. The 78-year-old Chibitty is the last surviving World War II Army Comanche "code talker."

By Rudi Williams
American Forces Press
Service

WASHINGTON — Charles Chibitty, 78, was honored here Nov. 30 as the last surviving World War II Army Comanche "code talker" during an emotional ceremony in the Pentagon's Hall of Heroes.

The ceremony was punctuated by thundering drumbeats echoing through the Pentagon corridor and "vocables" of joy and sadness. "Vocables" are sounds replacing words so various Native American

tribes can sing together.

Chibitty received the Knowlton Award, created by the Military Intelligence Corps Association in 1995 to recognize significant contributions to military intelligence efforts. The award is named in honor of Revolutionary War Army Lt. Col. Thomas Knowlton.

Arthur L. Money, assistant secretary of defense for command, control, communications, and intelligence, presented Chibitty the award in recognition of the role he and 16 other Comanche Indians played in cloaking

military messages on the battlefields of Europe. The Comanches frustrated enemy code breakers by translating Army messages into their native language. The enemy never broke the code.

The code talkers are credited with saving countless American and allied lives, said Money, who also presented Chibitty an American flag that was flown over the capitol and a framed letter from Johnny Waugua, chairman of the Comanche Tribe of

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Oklahoma.

“Volunteers like Mr. Chibitty were key to the U.S. and allied forces’ success from Normandy to Berlin,” Money said. “History has proven that our ‘code talkers’ thoroughly confounded our enemy’s intelligence collection efforts, which on several occasions gave us the tactical advantage to ensure success while minimizing the risk to our troops.”

“It’s incredibly ironic that my agency, the Bureau of Indian Affairs, dedicated itself for the first half of this century to destroying the native languages that proved to be so useful to our armed forces during World War II,” said Kevin Gover, the Department of Interior’s assistant secretary of Indian affairs. “It’s a great irony that in just two or three generations of being in conflict with the United States, our warriors would go forward and play

such a crucial role in the victory over this country’s enemies.”

Chibitty said the French government recognized Comanche code talkers in 1989 by presenting them that country’s second highest honor — naming each a Knight of the National Order of Merit. But, he said, being honored at the Pentagon was special because “you’re home folks.”

“I always wonder why it took so long to recognize us for what we did,” Chibitty said, holding back tears as he spoke of his deceased Comanche comrades. “They’re not here to enjoy what I’m getting after all these years. Yes, it’s been a long, long time.”

Using the code the Comanches cre-

ated in 1941 during training at Fort Benning, Ga., Chibitty sent the first message on D-Day which, in English, translated to “Five miles to the right of the designated area and five miles inland the fighting is fierce and we need help.”

“We compiled a 100-word vocabulary of military terms during training,” said Chibitty, who joined the Army in January 1941 along with 20 other Comanches. “The Navajo did the same thing. The Navajos became code talkers about a year after the Comanches, but there were over a hundred of them because they had so much territory (in the Pacific Theater) to cover.”

Choctaw Indians were used as code talkers during World War I.



The Knowlton Award recognizes significant contributions to military intelligence efforts.

Electronic newspaper your source for news

**By Tech. Sgt. Lee Roberts,
USAF**

Command Run Editor

MIAMI -- Today's issue of *Command Run* is the beginning of a new era for getting the "word out" to the members assigned to the headquarters of the U.S. Southern Command.

Until recently, military and civilian personnel at the headquarters depended on SOUTHCOM input to the *Flightlines* newspaper at Homestead Air Reserve Station, Fla., and a host of other command newsletters to stay informed.

Recognizing the need for a single source of information, the Public Affairs Office



Tech. Sgt. Lee Roberts

decided to pursue the creation of an electronic newspaper.

Over the past several months the office has been acquiring the necessary computer hardware and software to launch this new news medium - and today's issue is the result.

The *Command Run* offers

news, features, lifestyles, health, leisure and sports stories, as well as news briefs, classifieds, comments and highlight sections.

To begin with, you can expect the paper to be available on the Intranet and Internet sites on the last Friday of each month. Sometime in the future, Public Affairs hopes to increase the frequency of issues to bi-monthly.

As the editor, I want to hear from you to know if I'm providing the information you are looking for, or for suggestions. And, if you know of some newsworthy event that may be of interest to the readers of the *Command Run*, please give me a call at (305)

437-1208 or by E-mail at **robertsl@hq.southcom.mil**.

SCPA can't promise to cover every event that comes along, but we will try to prioritize each request for fair coverage.

SCPA will also accept stories and photos from anyone in the command. We can edit and publish your stories in the paper for everyone to see.

Remember, this is your paper. It is only as good as you make it. As the editor, I gather the news and lay out the pages. But if the readers don't inform me of what's going on or how I can improve, the paper may not be a true success.

So let me hear from you, and enjoy the *Command Run*!

Command Run feedback

The following comments have recently been E-mailed to the *Command Run* by our readers.

(Editor's note: This section is where the editorial staff will print various comments about this publication sent via E-mail or snail mail by our readers.)

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Command Spotlight



Name: Air Force Staff Sgt. Bridget R. Plifka

Organization: U.S. Southern Command Protocol Office

Duty title: Protocol NCO

Time in service: 7 years

Hometown: Longwood, Fla.

Family: Husband John Plifka in SPACINC Office

Hobbies: Reading, crafts

Most embarrassing moment: My most embarrassing Protocol moment was being required to pour after-dinner liquors. I wasn't familiar with what glasses a mixed drink should be poured into. Trying to wing it, I poured enough for three people into one big glass.

Favorite duty station: U.S. Southern Command

Career Highlights: Having lunch with Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force; airman of the year in 1994 for 4th Airlift Squadron, McChord Air Force Base, Wash.; and flying on mission to repatriate remains of U.S. soldiers. She is the most recent U.S. Southern Command Senior Enlisted Person of the Quarter.

Command Run

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Marine Corps General Charles E. Wilhelm..... *Commander in Chief*
 Army Colonel Ronald B. Williams.....*Director of Public Affairs*

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 Air Force Tech. Sgt. Lee Roberts..... *Editor*
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Hometown News Releases

If you are recognized for an award, a promotion, an impending transfer, education and training achievements, or participation in military exercises, fill out a **Hometown News Release**.

Your friends and family back home will appreciate reading about your accomplishments. All active-duty and civilian workers are eligible and the

process is easy. Army and Air Force members can fill out a HNR by obtaining a copy of DD Form 2266 or using the computer generated version of Delrina Form Flow. Also, Navy members can fill out a NAVSO 5724/1 form.

Participants should send the accomplished form to Public Affairs with attached copy of any award citation.



Photo by U.S. Air Force Tech. Sgt. Lee Roberts

The Command Run

Department of Defense Police Officer Mario Flores salutes Maj. Gen. Alfred Valenzuela, U.S. Southern Command deputy commander in chief, during a recent command run. The command's newspaper takes its name from this rigorous multi-mile run, a weekly command ritual started in 1997 by Gen. Charles E. Wilhelm, U.S. Southern Command commander in chief. It is a ritual he has established at commands throughout his career.